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OF RELIGION

The Religion of Abraham Lincoln

BY WILLIAM E. BARTON

And their prince shall be of themselves, and their ruler shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me . . . and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. Jeremiah 30:21-22.

IN THE midst of the pessimism and despair that came in the backwash of war, Jeremiah affirmed as no prophet ever had declared it, the sovereignty of the human soul and the majesty of a people ruled by the authority of conscience. The temple had been destroyed; the Davidic throne was in ruins. What was left? The authority of God's law in the faithful soul was left; the "new covenant" in which each man allied with God became ruler of his own spirit and a participant in the rule of the nation politically and spiritually, this was left, and it was something which despotism could not destroy. "I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their hearts will I write it; and I will be their God and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." This is the Magna Charta of democracy. But what about rulers? An intelligent people, governed by the will of God, is capable of raising up its own leadership; their princes shall be of themselves and their rulers shall proceed from the midst of them.

That is, on the face of it, a promise of freedom from foreign tyranny; but it is more than that. It is the

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declaration that a free people is capable of producing its own rulers.

Let us devoutly hope and pray that this shall ever be true of our own country. For there is danger that democracy will become the tool of the boss, the opportunity of the grafter, or degenerate into such worship of the commonplace and distrust of all that excels, that democracy shall defeat its own ends. Democracy must not only be capable of producing its leaders, but of recognizing them, of setting them on high, and of sustaining them in their righteous and divinely authorized leadership.

It has not invariably done so. Kipling knew that he was writing something destined to be unpopular, but he probably never repented of writing:

> Whether the people be led of the Lord
> Or lured by the loudest throat,—

and his terrible chorus:

> Once there was The People; Terror gave it birth;
> Once there was The People, and it made a hell of Earth:
> Earth rose up and smote it; listen, O ye slain,
> Once there was The People; it must never be again!

But there is no remedy in what Kipling suggested,

> Holy Church or Holy King or Holy People's Will—
> Have no truck with the senseless thing—order the guns and kill!

The trouble is that The People themselves, senseless and troublesome as they are, are quite familiar with the guns and prepared to do some of the killing if need be on their own account. The alternative suggested by Jeremiah is better; that the people shall be intelligent, righteous, self-governing, and empowered to raise up and choose their own leaders.

I

The career of Abraham Lincoln illustrates at once the facts that the people are in very great danger of not always meeting this heavy responsibility, and that in spite of all their stupidity they do not always fail. If any ruler in history was part and parcel of the life of his people, completely representative of their land and its population and its inherent qualities, that man was Abraham Lincoln. Such a man, given to a nation once in a hundred years, revives our faith in democracy.

But it may well do more than this; for we must seek to discover if we may the hiding of his power. We know his ancestry, Anglo-Saxon in every line and on both sides, seventh in descent through each of his parents from honorable but humble families of wholly English antecedents; but what do we know about his personal faith, and the roots of his character in those convictions which we properly denominate religious?

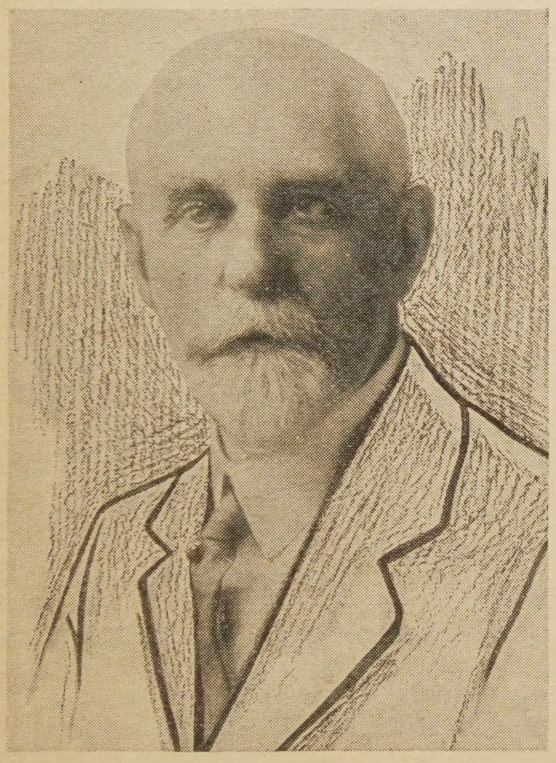
First, we know the religion of his environment in his youth. His parents were Primitive Baptists, members of the Little Mount church in Hardin county, Kentucky. That church is no longer in existence, but the little cemetery is there which marks the site of the old log meeting house, and the Nolin church from which the Little Mount church separated is still worshiping where it was established and where the Lincolns attended its services. Its records show the cause of the division, which was slavery. We have no need to inform ourselves of the extent and intensity of the anti-slavery movement in the south. Singularly, in the beginning, that religious opposition to slavery had especial vitality in that very unprogressive communion, the Primitive Baptists. It was not confined to that sect. There were five ministers in Kentucky's first constitutional convention, two Baptists, two Presbyterians and one Methodist. All five labored and voted in favor of writing into the constitution a provision that Kentucky should be forever free. A Presbyterian, Rev. David Rice, was the leader. The Lincoln family did not inherit its anti-slavery views from Jesse Head, the Methodist minister who married Lincoln's parents. In the first place, he had no anti-slavery views, being himself a slave-holder; and in the second place, Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks were not his parishioners and may never have heard him preach; and in the third place they held those views already.

Abraham Lincoln was born in midwinter. If the weather was bad and water was high, he may not have begun his church-attendance before May. Once a month, according to Baptist custom, and Methodist also, there was service in the Little Mount church. "The Baptists rule by Saturdays and the Methodists by Sundays" (you must say Babtists, not Baptists), but both sects had circuit-riding pastors. The first preacher whom the lad Abraham Lincoln remembered was probably William Downs, who was born in Kentucky in 1782, and whose father was killed by Indians. Downs was reared near the mouth of Knob creek, on which the Lincolns later lived. He received what for the time was a fair education and for a time taught school. He was an untidy man, much too fond of liquor, but he had ability and strong convictions and a certain rude eloquence. He was pastor of the Little Mount church. Abraham Lincoln in his Kentucky boyhood may have heard no other preachers than Baptists. Hodgenville was a Baptist settlement. The minister who preached the funeral sermon at the grave of Abraham Lincoln's mother in Indiana, Rev. David Elkin, was a Baptist, whom the family must surely have known in Kentucky. Dennis Hanks was right when he said of people who tried to make the Lincolns members of other churches, "This is not so; they was Babtists."

Governor Thomas Ford, whose History of Illinois is notable for its human interest and its frank controversialism that spared neither friend nor foe, says of the early preachers on the prairies that almost without exception they were unlearned men, but that no one of them had any difficulty in finding a congregation still more ignorant than himself. That had been true of the frontier generally, and more or less it is true now. Indeed, that is about all that gives to any of us the courage to preach. It is easy for men who have not known these shirt-sleeve pulpiteers to hold up to ridicule their lack of learning and of culture and to assume that their religion, dogmatic, emotional, ungrammatical, was worse than none. But I spent several of the

early years of my ministry among them, and I do not agree with any of these judgments. They served their day and generation well; but their limitations were obvious, and it would have been fortunate for Abraham Lincoln if he had fallen under the influence of a more progressive ministry.

The pioneer preachers were hard-hitting controversialists, who ranted and chanted and spat in regular and approved homiletic fashion. When one of them got well into his sermon he would pause for a moment, as I often witnessed when I was among them years ago, and saying, "Hold on! I never could preach with my coat on!" would pull off his jeans coat (which he thanked God had never breshed no dust off'n nary college wall) and performed in his linsey-woolsey shirt and jeans trousers and home-made cowhide shoes.



WILLIAM E. BARTON

Abraham Lincoln in his youth probably never heard a preacher who believed the earth to be round. He may never have heard the subject debated, because practically every one in the congregation believed the same; but if a school-teacher had had the temerity to teach that the earth was round, the preacher would probably have denounced him as an infidel. I know, for I was such a teacher, and I debated with two Baptist preachers on two successive Friday nights, the question, "Resolved, that the earth is flat and stationary and that the sun moves around it once in twenty-four hours." It is said that in his youth Abraham Lincoln was sometimes called an infidel; possibly he thought so himself. Believing the earth round was infidelity in the mind of these brethren.

One is not to judge those preachers by this test alone. They were earnest corn-plowing, militant men, and they preached a blazing hell appropriate for the time.

II

This religion did not attract Abraham Lincoln. His father and mother were consistent Baptists; his stepmother was immersed in Indiana and joined the Baptist church "by experience." His sister joined, but he did not.

Thomas and Sarah Lincoln, removing from Indiana to Illinois, took their church letters with them, but found no Baptist church conveniently near for them to join. In Coles county they affiliated with the Disciples of Christ, probably because it was convenient; and when Thomas Lincoln died it was Rev. Thomas Goodwin of that church who preached his funeral sermon. I have been reliably informed that it could be heard distinctly for at least half a mile; for some people who were at that distance so heard it and told me. And this certifies that Thomas Lincoln's funeral sermon was to that extent what such a sermon in that day ought to have been.

In the second place, we know the church with which Abraham Lincoln affiliated in his manhood. It was the Old School Presbyterian church. His wife, Mary Todd, had been reared a Presbyterian; but when she went to Springfield to live, she was in the home of her sister, Mrs. Ninian W. Edwards, and the Edwards family were Episcopalians. She went to church with her sister's family. Whether she was confirmed or not is unknown; her one surviving sister doubts it. Rev. Charles Dresser, the rector of the Episcopal church in Springfield, married Abraham Lincoln to Mary Todd, and the relation between Mr. Dresser and Mr. Lincoln was a pleasant one. Mr. Dresser had a brother-in-law who had been a missionary, and to him Lincoln presented a religious book, which is now in my own collection. But Abraham Lincoln was not made to be an Episcopalian. He had no love of a liturgy. A sermon, well reasoned, he liked; and he liked to hear singing; but he disliked liturgical forms. As Dennis Hanks said, "But for a man to preach a sermon, he liked that."

In February, 1850, little Eddie Lincoln died, and Mr. Dresser was out of town. The service was conducted by Rev. James Smith, pastor of the First Presbyterian church in Springfield. Dr. Smith was a Scotchman who had had a notable debate with a skeptic and had printed the substance of his arguments in a thick volume called "The Christian's Defense." Lincoln read this book, the first he had ever read on the evidence of Christianity. Those have probably claimed too much who have said that Lincoln was then converted. Certainly he was impressed. The Lincoln family moved their attendance to the First Presbyterian church, which Mrs. Lincoln joined. Her husband attended with something approaching regularity, and he paid his pew-rent, fifty dollars a year, for the pew that had been occupied by Governor Matteson, till the Lincoln family removed to Washington, a period of ten years. There he attended the New York Avenue Presbyterian church, the pastor of which, Rev. P. D. Gurley, offered a prayer at Lincoln's deathbed and conducted the funeral service in the White House after his death.

I am able to state positively, and shall some time publish the fact and the evidence, that Lincoln's relations with the Springfield church were closer than has ever been published. But he did not become a member of any church, or of any secret society, at any time during his life. He was an extremely conservative man; he was not greatly given to joining. Would he have joined Dr. Gurley's church if he had lived? I do not know, but I doubt it.

III

In the third place, we know enough about the mind of Lincoln to discredit almost every incident in which men have tried to reproduce from memory their conversations with Lincoln concerning his religious beliefs. He was a most secretive man, and he had little liking for conversation on the subjects which he cared most about. That he said to a man in Springfield, "Christ is God," and to another in Washington, "I do love Jesus," and that he left Washington and journeyed to Brooklyn to have Henry Ward Beecher pray with him, are stories that come to us with good names attached to them, and I do not believe one of them. Practically, I throw out every story related about Lincoln's personal faith as alleged to have been confessed to any individual whose word is unsupported by other evidence. I do not call these people liars; I have been dealing with Lincoln material long enough to know that truthful people seldom tell the truth, and almost never do they tell a story truthfully when the circumstances are such that they know that their stories can not be investigated. I do not say in my haste that all men are liars; I say deliberately that I do not accept at its face value any narrative which declares that Abraham Lincoln made confession of his faith to an individual, unless the story can be supported by additional evidence. I shall presently state one incident which I do believe, and it is important.

When, after the battle of Antietam, Lincoln assembled his cabinet and for the second time read to them his proposed proclamation of emancipation, prefacing the reading, not by a chapter from the Bible but by one from Artemus Ward, he said to his cabinet that he was not reading it to ask their approval; he had read it once before to them and he knew the opinion of every man there concerning it; he would be glad of any suggestion as to language, particularly any suggestion that might make the proclamation more acceptable to the people; but as for the proclamation itself, he had promised his God that he would issue it. This he said in a somewhat low tone, and Secretary Chase asked him to repeat it. Still speaking in a low tone, but very distinctly, Lincoln told his cabinet that when General Lee invaded Maryland, he, Lincoln, promised his God that if Lee were driven back, he would free the slaves.

Why do I believe this story, and discard a score or a hundred other incidents?

I believe this because it is the best attested incident of any cabinet meeting in the history of the American government. Salmon P. Chase recorded it in his diary that night and so did Gideon Welles. Here are two completely independent records, contemporary and authentic, not recollections conjured up long afterward and colored by a desire to prove something, but personal records such as these men were accustomed to make daily, of the events of the day. They were not published till long years afterward and they agree. Not only so, but Frank B. Carpenter, the artist, during the six months in which he lived in the White House to make his noted painting, had every member of the cabinet and Lincoln himself for hours sitting to him, and he questioned them all as to every slightest incident connected with the event which his painting commemorated, and he recorded as the consensus of testimony of all these men that Lincoln told them that he had promised his God that he would free the slaves. Carpenter published his little book while all these men were living, and no man of them said he had been misquoted. If anything can be proved by human testimony it is that this very conservative man, Abraham Lincoln, who much disliked turning his soul inside out for the benefit of the curious, told his cabinet, quietly and distinctly, of his vow to God, and of the fulfillment of that vow. Certainly the man who did that believed in God, in duty, in prayer, and in a covenant relationship between God and man.

IV

Fourthly, we know something more about the form of Lincoln's faith. He was, first of all, a predestinarian. The hyper-calvinism of his early teaching made him virtually a fatalist. And that same Calvinistic faith drove him to be practically a Universalist. Of the Universalist church as an organization he knew nothing; but believing in the sovereignty of God and also in God's eternal goodness, he was driven to believe, not that there was no hell, for a hell he certainly believed in, but that the hell in which he believed would not continue after it ceased to do good. It was not his liberalism that made him a Universalist; it was his conservatism. The sheer momentum of his belief in the sovereignty of God made it impossible for him to believe in the eternal damnation of one human soul.

We know that he read the first edition of Chambers' "Vestiges of Creation," that preceded Darwin's "Origin of Species," and that he was convinced and became an evolutionist. We know further that he read the sixth edition of the same book, which dealt more with the agreement of the truth of evolution with religion, and that he came to a belief in what he called "miracles under law." He could not believe in miracles that were God's violations of his own laws, but he believed in a God who controlled his universe.

The supernatural did not trouble Lincoln. He and his wife were both superstitious. He believed in immortality; his faith in it appears to have been implicit. He was quite willing to accept a universe in which forces were operative above the explanations that belong to ordinary events; but he was not willing to believe in the supernatural as exercised capriciously or in contradiction of the order of cause and effect.

wage earners who get enough so that they can buy automobiles.

We run here upon a matter of major significance. In the long run, good business and good morals say the same thing. It was morally wrong to hire laborers for only what would keep soul and body together, and now it turns out that it was economically wrong too. A business friend of mine tells me that a few years since, when he attended the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania, this new doctrine had not yet come up over the horizon. The old idea was still in the ascendency that successful industry depended on hiring labor in the cheapest market, but he says that at the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce there has been a revolution. It is plain now that you cannot have mass production without multitudes of consumers able to buy. It is altogether the most important revolution that has taken place since the coming in of the machine.

HARRY EMERSON FOSDICK

This last summer a group of American manufacturers in Europe were called upon to give advice upon an industrial situation. They gave it careful consideration, and what do you suppose was the first item in their counsel? Double the wages of your employes! The European manufacturers almost fainted on the spot. Of all insane prescriptions for a difficult industrial situation, what could be crazier than, Double your wages! But the Americans were right. What that situation needed was consumers and all the productive geniuses in the world cannot handle such a situation without common people who can buy.

We all of us, for example, honor and love Mr. Thomas Edison. He is a genius. Yet Mr. Thomas Edison never would have had a chance to be Mr. Thomas Edison in Zululand. There would have been no demand for his goods. People do not invent in a vacuum. Mr. Edison would be the first to say that the popular demand for artificial light plucked his coat sleeve, clamored at his gates, pulled the invention out of him at last. The whole American public wanting light, needing light, able to pay for light, contributed an indispensable element to that situation out of which at last genius wrought its amazing consequence. Those who create the demand create the future.

When, therefore, Paul said, "Desire earnestly the best gifts," he enunciated a principle, profound and powerful, with applications far beyond what he first dreamed. Indeed, it is so powerful that in the end it may have more to do with our international arrangements than all the political devices we spend so much time upon. Listen to this, for example, from a militaristic Englishman in 1897: If Germany were extinguished tomorrow, the day after tomorrow there is not an Englishman in the world who would not be richer. Think of that! That was said by a man outside of an insane asylum. It was not only said but it was sent to the Saturday Review and they published it in 1897. Since then we have had a war and Germany was defeated. It almost ruined England. England can never come back economically until Germany comes back, for England must have German markets. Abolish New York State and the next day every citizen of Massachusetts will be richer—what idiocy! For the basic element in our modern life is consumers, which means that in the long run it never can be ultimately well for anybody until it is well for everybody.

Now, so far we have been laying broad, and I hope deep, the foundations of our thought, but of course what we are interested in is the personal and spiritual application.

Creating a Demand in Religion

American preachers, I suspect, spend most of their time on the producing end of religion. Do good, they say; build righteousness, make churches, send missionaries, create a Christian social order—produce! produce! Now, without in the least detracting from that, for it is basically important, let us this morning think about the consuming end of religion. It is incalculably significant. Desire earnestly the best gifts.

For one thing, note that, whether we will or not, we none of us can stop creating a demand. Whatever else we may be able to put an end to inside ourselves, we cannot put an end to desire. From a new-born babe crying for its food to an old man wanting one more success, we are what somebody defined a boy as being—an appetite with a skin drawn over it. Moving thus through life, with

> Effort, and expectation, and desire,
> And something evermore about to be,

we inevitably create a demand wherever we go and call out from other people spiritual responses, good, bad, or indifferent. Sometimes one thinks that this unconscious process is far and away the most influential

portion of his life. We arise in the morning and set ourselves deliberately to the definite tasks upon our schedule. We run households, we manage businesses, perform professional service, and at eventide we count the things that we have done. But all the while this other process has been going on. We call for responses from everybody that we meet. By the inevitable presence of our desires we ask them for something good or bad, creating low pressure areas that draw the wind. We summon from them cleanness or uncleanness, selfishness or generosity, good will or bad temper. The producing end of our day may have been pretty good, but the consuming end—what have we called for from people?

You young man here with a hold on the affection of that girl. You know she would like to live an honorable life. If she had her way she would prefer to keep her self-respect. What demand are you creating in her life? What are you asking her for? It is hard enough to live on a high level without having somebody whom you like constantly dragging down. Desire earnestly in her the best gifts.

Or you young woman, do you realize about men what any man knows about himself, that if he loves a woman the strongest immediate motive of his life is what she wants of him? If a woman can genuinely win a man's love, she sets the gravitation of his soul and all his streams flow down the slopes of what she wants of him. What some women do with that tremendous power is—ah, well, no adjective is adequate! If you have a hold on a man's life like that, desire earnestly in him the best gifts.

The Best Things Must Be Demanded

Sometimes one goes to a store to buy an article and receives a reply like this: No, we have not that article; we used to carry it but there was no demand for it; you are the first person who has asked for that article in five years; we dropped it out of stock because it was not called for. Sometimes one meets lives like that. They started well; they had a good stock of potential fineness in them but they lived in a home or they moved in a social circle or they worked in a business office where the constant demand was for their worst and not their best. The finer things have dropped out of stock. They were not called for.

Repeatedly folk ask the minister to give them something to do. They want to get into the producing end of religion. Give me organizational responsibility, the man says; I want something to do. That is all admirable. We ought to produce. But if for some reason or other you cannot have a concrete task in organized religion or philanthropy, never suppose that you need to be useless. Just work through an ordinary day calling out the loveliest things from the people that you meet. You know people like that. It is easy for you to be at your best when they are around. They call your finest out. Sometimes one thinks that that sort of service does more to transform the world than all the definite tasks to which we deliberately give ourselves.

Turn this truth around and look at its obverse side, and see how true it is. There is no sin that in the abstract is attractive. I challenge you to think of one—lust, drunkenness, greed, selfishness. There is no sin that in the abstract is attractive. But give a sin flesh and blood, give it hands and feet, give it eyes and a face, let it be incarnate in somebody whom you know and like, and so clothed, let it beckon, and how attractive a sin can be! Have you ever watched a stream in the springtime freshet break through its banks and flow into a low-lying basin that was waiting for its flood? So one sees lives summoned out of their true course by low-lying personalities that call out their worst.

Jesus Drew the Best from People

Then think of Jesus. The producing side of his religion, as we commonly think of production, was extraordinarily limited. I mean that he wrote no books, he raised no budget, he built no churches, he bothered himself about no organization. The chief item in his ministry was drawing the best out of people. See what he is getting out of Simon Peter! Watch what he is bringing to the surface in the sons of Zebedee! Whenever he meets anybody, even the woman of Samaria, he earnestly desires the best gifts. Amazing ministry, incalculably significant! For that is what he is doing yet. We come under his spell and he calls out our best.

Let us turn now to the second thing we wanted to say. So far is it from being true that our morning principle applies only to personal relationships, it goes to the very pith of some of our crucial social situations. If it is rightly said that we have as good a government as we deserve, that our public policies will not rise to a higher level than our popular desires, we may be sure that holds everywhere else in our social life. The common people produce the producers. The idea, therefore, that the common people can do nothing but drag down civilization is at least an inadequate statement of the matter. The common people are the key to the situation. The common people are the crux of the future. The common people, by their accumulated desires, produce the producers.

For example, it is quite obvious that we ought to have a cheaper fuel to drive our machines. Thousands of automobilists want it. The result is that we will get it. A widespread demand like that produces the producers.

Now, the spiritual significance of this is immense. One of the most destructive things that anybody ever does is simply to love something low—not produce it, just love it and, by loving it, vote for it and encourage the provision of it. Look at wide areas of our modern literature, for example. Note the salacious bent, the libidinous trend, the subtle cleverness or the brutal statement of the sex appeal. You blame the author. So do I. You blame the publisher. So do I. But there is one person I blame more—the reader. He is the guilty party. He is the tempter. He goes up to author and publisher ringing gold upon the counter and saying, I will pay you hundreds of thousands of

dollars for another book like that. Desire earnestly the best gifts. If enough of us do it we will get them. We may not be able to write great books, produce great art, compose great music, but if enough of us want them we shall have them. The strongest motive in the life of man is a public that loves something and wants it. Strange, is it not? Appreciation, when widespread, is the most powerful social motive in the world.

The Problem of the Theater

When first I thought of this sermon months ago I inevitably thought of the theater as an illustration. Consider the theater in New York city with fine actor managers often desperately trying to persuade the public to like something beautiful and well done, while a play so brutally rotten that the police closed it after three nights, plays to $6,000 a night while it lasts. You say, Wicked producers! I say, Wicked consumers! That is the crux of the matter. They are the tempters. They ring gold on the counter saying, Give us nastiness.

This fact ought radically to revolutionize the attitude of the church toward the theater. The church has played the fool about the drama. The church has been altogether too content to preach to its select coterie while the drama, silent and spoken, has been alluring the imaginations and stirring the emotions and framing the ideals of multitudes of our citizens. It used to be thought that it was wrong for a Christian to go to the theater. I would almost say that it is wrong for a Christian not to go to the theater. I mean, we are bound to have drama. A Christian ought to vote for good drama, and the only way we can vote for good drama is to support it. If the theater falls into the hands of the panderers, as so largely is now the case, nobody is more to blame than good people like ourselves who so often leave high and dry without support the decent forces among the dramatists and the producers.

As for carelessness about the plays we see, how to the very marrow of that matter does our morning truth cut! Very probably there may be young persons,

A Pastoral Prayer

During the London Conference on Armaments

By George S. Fulcher, *First Presbyterian Church, Monmouth, Illinois*

LET US PRAY for the President of the United States.

Almighty God, who hast called to lead our people one who seeks to find thy will for himself and for the nation whose servant he is, disappoint him not in his seeking. Grant that he may find thy purpose clearly disclosed in the providence of events. Continue to bless him with the courage of a righteous cause. Give him the sense of fellowship with a mighty host who cherish with him the hope of a new day for the world. Let him not be turned from the straight path that leads to the fulfillment of the world's great hope. Grant peace in our time, O Lord.

Let us pray for our nation.

We are a people drawn from many peoples. Yet under thy grace, O Lord, have we learned to live and serve together. Truths we learned in many tongues have now been translated into a common loyalty and a glorious faith. By the light which comes from thee have we discovered the virtues of many peoples. In this great hour may our national insight into the virtues of our diverse citizenship open out into a clear faith in all mankind. Forbid that ancient fears should paralyze us. Deliver us from that selfishness which makes us slaves to old hatreds and old tragedies. May we discern clearly that our national destiny is to be a people chosen of thee to serve greatly in the world. Give us a heart of brotherliness. Help us to build by the divine process of service and sacrifice a world order of hope and peace. Grant peace in our time, O Lord.

Let us pray for the London Conference.

Thou hast said that those who take the sword shall perish by the sword. And to those who make peace Thou hast promised the blessings of thy kingdom. Let now thy special grace be vouchsafed to those assembled in a far city as they seek ways of peace and international friendship. Show them the folly and sin of conflict and slaughter as a means of composing disputes between the nations. Help us all to repress those things that make for war. Lift from our hearts the burden of fear. Grant that those who sit at the council table may hear the plea of the sacred dead that their sacrifice shall not have been in vain. Hasten the time when nations shall dwell together in mutual respect and in safety and shall learn war no more. Grant peace in our time, O Lord.

Let us pray for those who cannot see the light of hope that scatters the mists of hate.

Give all men of faith patience with men of fear. Thou knowest how hard it is for us, when the night is on, to believe that the dawn cometh. Give the spirit of faith to those multitudes who have not yet learned to let love have its way. Keep our unshepherded peoples from the hireling and the trickster who set traps to catch them unaware. Keep our minds from being poisoned by cynical and selfish and false accounts of what the nations are trying to do. Save us from acting rashly in the panic of an old age fear. Give us grace and soberness that we may take time to think. Snatch from the face of greed the mask of virtuous nationalism. Give wisdom to thy people, Lord. Grant peace in our time, O Lord.

This we pray in the name of Christ.—Amen.

perhaps old persons, here who are tempted to justify their right to attend cheap and vulgar drama. It is not the business of the pulpit to tell me what I may do with my personal morals, they say. The day has gone by when the parson could get anywhere by concerning himself with private morality like that. Very well! I am not talking primarily about personal morals. I am talking about a social question. Every time you attend a low drama you are voting for that kind of drama in America. You are going up to the producers and the dramatists saying, Give this country rottenness. You are saying, So far as I have any influence I vote for filth in the theater. That is the issue. That is what we are talking about.

My friends, the more a man watches life the more he must see the tragedy caused by loving cheap things. One would like to say once in a while to some life that he watches, You do not commit murder, you do not steal, you do not break the seventh commandment, you are a law-abiding citizen, but you love cheap things; you help to create the demand for them. The producing end of your life is pretty good but the consuming end—!

One suspects that there cannot have been many people in this congregation who have thought of this as a sermon on prayer. But it is. Desire earnestly—that is prayer. "Blessed," said Jesus, "blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness." That is prayer —not so much what you may happen to say when you are on your knees, as what you do honestly want of life, what you do dominantly demand. Let nobody say that prayer so understood is not powerful. It sways the souls and societies of men and it calls God into alliance. For real prayer is a man's sincere desire summoning the divine assistance. Therefore, says Paul, "Desire earnestly the best gifts," and he adds by way of description. "Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three."

What Is Religion For?

By Edward Scribner Ames

WE LIVE in a questioning age. Nothing is exempt. All customs, institutions, and especially all idealisms, are under examination. Any refusal to submit to inquiry is regarded as confession of weakness, if not of imposture. Religion cannot take refuge in its sanctity or its mysteries. If it will not answer for itself, then its case is left to critics and onlookers who may widely miss its inner spirit and intent.

Every minister now and then is called upon not merely to explain a particular miracle but the miraculous itself; not one article of the creed only, but creeds in general; not this or that ordinance, but the principle of authority back of all ordinances; not merely the meaning of some saying of Jesus, but the significance of the man himself; not one attribute of divinity, but the whole conception of God. Likewise men are insistently asking the ultimate question about religion: What is it for? Why religion? Do not many people live without it? What would be lost to human welfare or happiness if religion were gradually to disappear, as magic and superstition have already passed out of the most enlightened and civilized circles?

There is a central saying of Jesus which tells what religion is for, if there is any answer possible. That saying is, "I came that ye might have life and have it more abundantly." As in so many instances these words apply to the cause he represented, to the task which he shared with the great lawgivers and prophets of religion. He thought of himself not as destroying or creating, but as fulfilling. It is the voice of religion itself, announcing its own mission, asserting with unfaltering assurance: I came that ye might have life and have it more abundantly. That is what religion is for.

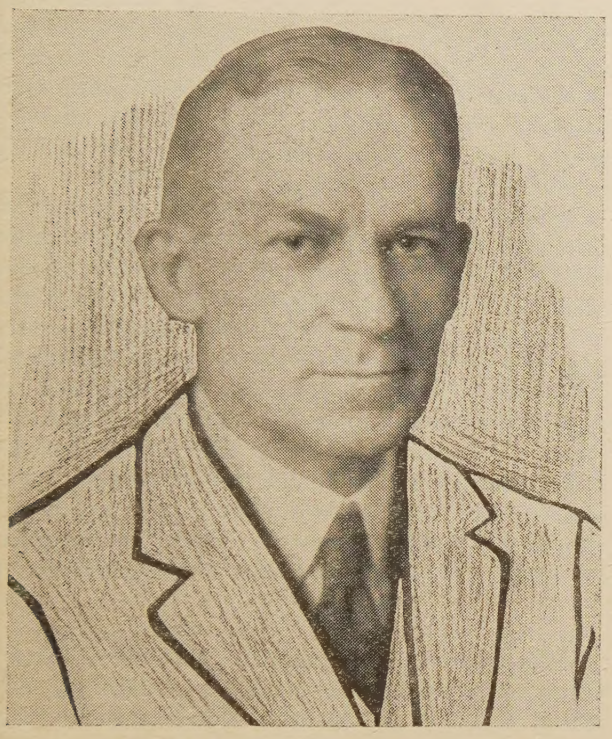
What Is Life?

But what is life? and what are the evidences that religion contributes to it? To live is to share in the things which human beings crave. It is to fulfill the wants and wishes which constitute the "drives" of human action. The psychologists and the moralists have listed these desires after careful observation. While varying in the terms employed, and in the refinements of their enumeration, these scholars agree that life for human beings means having health, wealth, friends, knowledge, pleasure and beauty. To live is to have these things, and to live abundantly is to have them in good measure and in due proportion. To lack any of them narrows and impoverishes the whole personality.

It requires no argument to show that these are the things men and women seek. The most casual observation in health resorts, in marts of trade, in social groups, in class rooms, on playgrounds and in art galleries shows "what men live by." These interests are native and spontaneous. They are universal and persistent. All natural religions have cultivated and prized them. The medicine man, the priest, the magician, and the prophet, have labored for these goods of life; and when a developed culture has not succeeded in obtaining them to a satisfying degree in this life, it has sought them in a world beyond.

The fundamental values which Jesus offered were these commonplace values of daily life in fuller measure and more satisfying proportion. In his public ministry he became famous as a healer, a purveyor of health. He encouraged his disciples to cherish dreams of wealth—wealth which would come easily to those who sought, first, the kingdom of God. He made friendship and love the highest relation between himself and his disciples. They were not to think of him as a master before whom they were slavish servants, but as a friend with whom they could have the equality and freedom of friendship. He knew the importance of knowledge and encouraged his followers to seek it. Wisdom is justified of her children, and the

truth makes men free. His recreations were those of his time and culture. He went to dinner parties and exposed himself to the charge of being a winebibber and a glutton; he entered into the festive spirit of weddings; and when he was worn and weary, he found recreation on the lake and in the mountains. There he enjoyed beauty in the voices of wind and water; he was responsive to the charm of childhood and to the poetry of the sacred books. To represent him chiefly as a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," is to thrust into the foreground one aspect of his experience, and to minimize his buoyant, humorous and hopeful spirit.



EDWARD SCRIBNER AMES

The religion of the churches which sprang from the religion of Jesus has similarly centered in the promotion of life taken concretely and realistically. The churches have built hospitals and furnished nurses. They have encouraged labor as a means to wealth and to power for good. They have befriended the lonely, and have created brotherhoods of love and comradeship. From the most intimate family group to the widest international bonds, religion has consecrated the ties of blood and human brotherhood. The Christian religion has provided schools for the cultivation of knowledge by research and instruction. It has trusted the truth and has gained freedom through it. In recent times the religion of the churches has given its influence to recreation in new and surprising ways. At first timidly, and as a forced concession to the needs of life, it tolerated sports and art, but today a more positive attitude has developed. Perhaps the Y. M. C. A. may be credited with bringing religion to the support of recreation. It has introduced physical culture and athletic contests as significant in the development of the spiritual nature, and has begun to encourage the long tabooed social pastimes of card playing, theater going and dancing. In some places it has removed the old restrictions on the enjoyment of these pleasures on Sunday. Such changes could not reach such official, institutional adoption in the spirit of mere toleration. They really mark the attainment of a positive conviction that wholesome, releasing pleasure not only prevents evils, but is itself a means of the enrichment and enhancement of life.

Art and Religion

The love of beauty lies deep in the heart of man. Personal adornment, decorative arts in dwellings and temples, dramatic ceremonials surrounding the main events of personal and social experience, mark the life of all peoples from the most primitive to the most developed. The ages of faith in Christian history have left their noble monuments of art, from the symbolism of the catacombs to the great cathedrals. Music, poetry and painting have enriched every detail of the Christian faith, and continue in new forms to enhance its meaning.

But religion renders a greater service than by glorifying these basic interests of life separately. It unifies them all in the wholeness and proportion of a balanced and integrated experience. The evils of life mainly spring from onesided, disproportionate emphasis upon particular goods. There is something revolting about a man who concentrates all his attention upon health or wealth or knowledge or pleasure. The rich fool who made his big barns and their stores his chief concern, lost his soul. Knowledge is a great good when made the instrument of a rounded life, but when set up as an end in itself it withers the power of friendship and hardens the spirit against the values of sympathy and beauty. Religion protests against knowledge for knowledge's sake, and against art for art's sake. Each interest is for the sake of the whole, and none can be fulfilled alone. Perhaps the principle is clearest in the pursuit of pleasure as an end in itself. Nowhere is the contrast sharper. The cultivation of sensuous delights, detached from their normal setting in a vigorous, purposive life, results in the most disappointing emptiness and ennui. They beget their own penalties and lead to their own destruction.

It is one of the tragedies of human history that the futility of pleasure—or wealth, or knowledge—when taken by itself has been misinterpreted to mean that pleasure is in every case antagonistic to the spiritual life. Thence have arisen many kinds of suppressions, asceticisms, and negative forms of saintliness. Religion has become identified for many individuals, and for whole sects, with extreme austerity, suspicion of natural joys, and fear of normal happiness. In our changing Protestantism, as it emerges from the gloom of Puritanism, this lingering antipathy to pleasure expresses itself in the popular conviction that at least the official representatives of religion—its priests and ministers—ought to be set apart by their solemnity, poverty and innocence. Or perhaps the fault lies with the ministers themselves, warped by their traditional training, allow-

ing themselves to feel inconsistent and hypocritical when they participate in the social recreations which belong to normal living. It should be their privilege and responsibility to live joyous, happy lives by means of a balanced, proportionate, rich experience.

Human life is by its very nature complex. Man has many interests, many duties, which have their legitimate claims upon his thought and energy. The soul, like the face, is beautiful only when its features bear a proper relation to one another. Only a slight exaggeration of the eyes or nose or mouth distorts the visage. Spiritual monstrosities are more common than physical eccentricities, but they are not so easily discerned. If the gluttonous man could in a mirror see himself with a huge mouth, or the sensualist see his eyes bulging from his face, or the cynic see his nose unduly protruding and upturned, each might better understand the nature of the evil which besets him.

The Good Life

Religion does not prescribe a peculiar kind of life as the good life. It rather discovers from experience what is a beautiful and wholesome way of living and holds up that tested and approved life as its ideal and goal. Its proper task is not the suppression or elimination of any natural impulse or tendency, but the inclusion of all interests in their most fruitful degree and function within the living body of manifold relations and activities. So conceived, religion encourages self-expression, self-realization, and self-fulfillment. It impels to abundant, joyous living.

Not only does religion make for this organization and unity. It also encourages the dominance of the whole by what experience shows to be the highest goods. There is a natural scale of values. A man often foregoes bodily comfort in labor for material gain. He exchanges wealth for knowledge and for beauty. To act in the light of such a scale of values is to act spiritually. To invert the scale is to be foolish and evil. Religion tries to keep life right side up, to put first things first, to recognize the relatively great and relatively small. Some things are worthy to be sought first, to receive the major emphasis, to be made the measure and standard of all others, but they are not good in themselves, separate and apart. They are good only because they bring every other interest into its fullest development and happiest expression. The religious life, exalting the spiritual ideal, makes for health, wealth, friendship, knowledge, beauty and joy. It moves with the charm of symmetry and freedom, harmonious and expansive, attuned to loveliness and deepest happiness.

Besides unifying life and ordering it under the dominance of the highest values, it is the task of religion to socialize life's goods. It emphasizes the fact that no man liveth to himself, and that he cannot realize himself in any direction to the fullest extent in solitude. Knowledge grows through conversation, through discussion and mutual criticism. Wealth develops through cooperation, by stock companies and corporations. Pleasure flows from games, from companionship in recreation, from friendly rivalry of teams and partners. Religion likewise rises to its heights in ceremonials, in assemblies, in festivals, in dramatic pageants, where the many are inspired by the symbols of a common faith. All religion is ancestral and communal. Any effort to isolate it, to appropriate it in an exclusive, individualistic way makes it esoteric and pharisaic. The individualism which makes wealth miserly, or knowledge pedantic, or pleasure perverted, makes religion bigoted and debased. There is something revolting about hermits and anchorites. Even the monastic life had to be institutionalized and communized. It had to make sorties into the "world" in order to share its faith and seek recruits. Its boasted isolation was a delusion, unreal and self-deceiving. The only apparent escape and isolation of its members was through the monastic institution which was rich and powerful and sufficiently identified with the "world." Whatever values the monastic life afforded flowed from the association, discipline, and mutual stimulation of its fellowship and brotherhood.

Religion means a shared life, and it involves the natural impulse of man to communicate to his fellow men whatever is experienced as supremely good. Schools normally seek scholars, business seeks customers, the arts display exhibits, and religion conducts missions. When wealth ceases to make investments, and pleasure hides its allurements, and friendship refuses hospitality, religion may close its missions and silence the voice of its prophets. But so long as business advertises, and teachers share their knowledge, and social workers cultivate the welfare of their neighbors, religion will continue to spread its light, and proclaim its message of love and the claims of a spiritual life.

A Shared Life

Religion differs from the special interests of life in that it cultivates them all. It is not a competitor with any of them, but the means of fulfilling each in the highest degree. A church, rightly conceived, is not merely one among many institutions: it is inclusive and embraces the purposes of all the rest. It is to the various concerns of life what the tree is to its roots and branches. Those who look for religion as one among the many interests of life will never find it. It is the whole tree of life and no one of its parts. Separated and scattered, roots, branches, leaves and seeds are inert and useless. Growing together, fashioned into a living whole, they are living and productive. It is the task of religion to bring all the elements of life into a dynamic unity, where each has its function and its proper part.

It is this which constitutes the spiritual character of life. Spirituality cannot be attained at its highest where any of the particular factors are lacking or undeveloped. Anemic individuals are no longer thought to have an advantage in cultivating the spiritual life. It is rather felt that a healthy soul is more likely to flourish in a healthy body. The extraction of bad teeth is not merely a means to physical comfort; it may be an essential to that gentleness and patience which condition all the Christian virtues. Similarly, such a measure of wealth as constitutes a competence for shar-

ing in the normal interests and activities of one's social order is a condition of spirituality. Grinding poverty which shuts the doors to knowledge and art and recreation, narrows the soul and prevents its growth.

A New Age of Faith

This is the new insight by which religion in the modern age is making its adjustment to the secular interests of life, and preparing for a new age of faith. We have entered upon a wonderful era of science, of industry and of cities. We call it the machine age. Many regard it as an age of materialism and of extreme secularism. They fear the extinction of spirituality and of religion. All depends upon the relation which science and the machine are allowed to take. Certainly it is conceivable that they may be means to greater enrichment and development of all the central concerns of man. Already they afford means of health, of knowledge, of appreciation of beauty.

It is true, the old repressions are disappearing. There is less insistence upon the idea that a man should be content with the state in which he was born. We are learning to prevent disease, to lengthen life, to cast out fear, to assert our right to a share in the joys of successful reasonable living. In contrast to the older faith, which thought of this life as merely probationary, and in itself treacherous and evil, we are beginning to believe that this present life may have spiritual meaning, that it may be so lived that all its resources may minister to a refined, noble and meaningful existence. The old convictions of the sinfulness and deceitfulness of human nature are relaxing their hold, and a happier, more optimistic faith in mankind is winning its way.

Religion therefore may emerge into a new place and power. Instead of struggling against the seemingly mere secularization of life, it may recognize its opportunity to work for the balanced and unified inclusion of all basic interests in a rich and varied experience, dominated by the spiritualizing influences of knowledge and love. Its ministry may thus become releasing and directive for all the deep natural impulses, and a means of radiating happiness and joy in the wholesome and invigorating task of making the most out of the resources and powers with which we are endowed.

Such tendencies in the finest religious thought and endeavor of our time portend a new and more appealing age of faith, the faith that God dwells among men, and offers all the riches of the divine life to those who seek him in the ways of friendly and righteous living.

The Glory of Lincoln

WHO builds of stone a shrine to bear his name
Shall be forgot when months and years have flown;
Who writes his name upon the scroll of fame
The centuries shall find to men unknown;
But who for fellow men endured the shame
Shall have eternal glory for his own.

THOMAS CURTIS CLARK.

"The Boat Which Was Simon's"

BY JOHN M. VERSTEEG

He entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's. *Luke* 5:3.

I

THE importance of a thing is largely determined by the use to which it is put. The Mayflower was not much of a ship; but it is immortal because it contained a boatload of history-makers. It conveyed a company consequential to the future of the race, a group of brave women and

lean men with empires in their brain;
Who pitched a state as other men pitch tents,
And led the march of time to great events.

The Mayflower would never have been heard of, had not the Pilgrims boarded it.

And Simon's boat would never have been heard of, had not Jesus boarded it! That was its claim to fame. "And *he* entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's." That boat was placed at the disposal of Jesus when Jesus needed it. Time was when it housed Jesus. That made history for the boat, and of it. And that, among other things, made history for Simon.

Simon and the sea and ships belonged together. It could not have been otherwise. He was to the manner born. It was his business in life. And he had business to be in business. He was a married man. He had a living to make. When Jesus first found him, he was industriously working away. He had his home to look after. But he was fisherman and boatsman not merely by business, but by bent. His task was to his taste. One always knew where to look for Simon; he could be found any day in a boat. Almost to the end, you may trace Simon in this way. When Cornelius, the Cæsarean centurion, had his vision of the angel of God, he discovered that "Simon, surnamed Peter, lodgeth with one Simon a tanner, whose house is by the sea." Where the sea was, Simon was; one could count on that. He never lost his love for the sea, nor for putting out on it. "I go a-fishing," he said, what time things looked dark. "I go a-fishing!" We can hear him say it yet. He could find some consolation in *that!* Simon, the sea and ships belonged together.

Jesus, the Sea and Ships

And Jesus and the sea and ships belonged together. Measured by the Atlantic and Pacific, or by the Mediterranean, the ocean of that day, it was not much of a sea, that sea of Galilee; but it was enough of a sea for a soul to feast on and grow on, and for many a ship to go on. Bishop Quayle truly said that the sea was "Christ's background and playground and workground," and this was especially true in the later days of his life. As if to be nearer that aspect of nature

he peculiarly loved, when he had opportunity, he "came and dwelt in Capernaum by the sea." Plato feared the sea. "Build inland," he pleaded. "The sea fills a country with merchandise and money-making and bargaining; it breeds in men's minds habits of financial greed and faithlessness, alike in its internal and in its foreign relations." Nor was Plato alone in this fear. The writer of Revelation, in a melancholy if poetic mood, expressed the hope that the time might come when "there shall be no more sea." Who can blame him for that? For the sea shut him off from his friends and shut him out of his task. But one could never get Jesus to cast his vote in favor of "no more sea." He would have taken issue with this writer and with Plato. He was for the sea, hands up and soul up! You would be too, had the sea only once really taken your heart by surprise. Jesus loved, as did Longfellow:

> The beauty and the mystery of the ships,
> And the magic of the sea.

For the sea is poetry, and Jesus was a master poet, even though he made never a rhyme. Jesus and the sea and ships belonged together.

I Go a-Fishing

Nor is this all of the story. Simon, the sea, the ships, *and Jesus* belonged together. Here is a quartet for you! The first time Jesus met Simon, these four were there. The story is in the gospels. As Jesus "passed along the sea . . . he saw Simon and Simon's brother Andrew netting fish in the sea—for they were fishermen; so Jesus said to them, 'Come, follow me, and I will make you fish for men.' At once they dropped their nets and went after him. Then going on a little further he saw James the son of Zebedæus and his brother John; they too were in their boat mending their nets; he called to them at once, and they left . . . to follow him." So much for the first time Jesus and Simon met. As for the last time they met, the author of the gospel of John, writing history by way of poetry, was swift to note that these four again were on hand. Count them over: The Savior, Simon, the sea and the ships; has more distinguished company ever elsewhere met? And this is the manner of his telling: Simon said to the other disciples: "I am going to fish." They said, "We are coming with you." Off they went and embarked in the boat, but that night they caught nothing. Now at break of day Jesus was standing on the beach (though the disciples did not know it was Jesus). "Boys," said Jesus, "did you get anything?" "No," they answered. So he told them, "Throw your net on the right of the boat, and you will get a haul." At this, they threw the net, and now they could not haul it for the mess of fish. So the disciple who was Jesus' favorite said to Peter: "Peter, it's the Lord, the Lord!" Hearing it was the *Lord,* Simon Peter threw on his shirt (he was stripped for work) and jumped into the water to get to Jesus first! Then after breakfast Jesus said to Simon, "Simon Johnson, do you love me more than the others do?" It is as if the gospels were in a conspiracy to tell us that, from beginning to end, the Savior, Simon, the sea and the ships belonged together.

II

If you had a say as to which was the least important of these four, would you vote the boat? Yet that ship was vital to the entire transaction. It will not do to separate Simon from Simon's boat. You can not divorce his from him. The gospels do not. They let the boat appear in many an act in which these two played a part in the drama of God. Simon's boat was Simon's place of business. It was a great thing in his life. But when Jesus called him he surrendered (but did not quit) his business. He did not permit his living to oppose his life. In his way, no doubt, Simon had been religious. Yet it did not figure dominantly in his life. But when Jesus called, when he saw the Jesus who was doing the calling, he got a new sense of proportion. What had been great to him—his business—now began to be small; and what had been small to him—his religion—now began to loom great. It is a way Jesus has with men. Once they hear him and see him, their values change. To see him is to look out on the world with new eyes. To hear him is to learn a new meaning of life. For Jesus' sake, Simon left the boat he kept. For Jesus' sake, Simon kept the boat he left. There it was, for Jesus, if ever he wanted it. Had he not heard the call? Falter he frequently did; he had his weak moments, his vulnerable spots; he suffered many defeats; yet was he never quit of that call. Sometimes it was like a dim echo, and then again like a note God struck on a million bells, but the call had come, and having come, kept coming. Henceforth, he was Christ's. And his boat? That, too, was Christ's!

The Poetry of Fishing

"And he entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's." You got that poetry, didn't you? Poetry is in the Bible as the wet is in the water lilies—part and parcel of it, inseparable from it. What poetry? Why, this: "The boat which *was* Simon's." The past tense is eloquent here. Go up to Simon as he sets out in the days before he met Christ. Ask him: "Whose is that boat?" And he says: "It is mine." Why does he say that? Because Simon is yet Simon. Simon is yet fisherman. And he does not yet know. Why does he not know? Because he has not yet met the Master. Wait until Jesus speaks and see what a change comes over him. Simon the prosaic becomes Simon the poet. He becomes man-fisher instead of fisherman. Watch him and you see the change. "What is this you are doing, Simon; don't you care any more for your boat?" And he says: "It is Christ I care for, and I care for my boat for Christ." To him what was great is now small, and what once was small is now great.

That day, by the side of the lake, Jesus was trying to preach, but the crowd was becoming too large to be reached readily. So "he entered into one of the boats, which was Simon's," and asked him to push out a little from the land. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. And in so doing, Jesus turned Simon's business place into a pulpit; he

changed his boat into a desk from which to teach men God! There must have been something sacred about that boat for Simon ever after that!

There is always something sacred about property when it is put to high purposes. What chance would Christ have to preach from our property? How admirably would the things we own suit his teaching purposes? Could your place of business be a pulpit for him? Is your boat still yours (though *yours* it can never quite be), or are you keeping it that Christ may

JOHN M. VERSTEEG

make use of it? Which is the voice that issues out from your property: that of Christ, or of Mammon? If Jesus were to walk into your office tomorrow, would he feel at home? Would you?

Except *he* "abide in the ship, ye can not be saved." Alas, how many boats there are which are not fit for Christ to enter! We are sailing so many Christless crafts that the sea of life is literally littered with them. Christless ships tend to become pirate ships. So many of these there are, that legitimate ships are unable to reach their desired haven. Those with cargoes of children are unfortunately belabored most. A man and his Christ are soon parted, if Christ gets no chance at his boat!

III

Let me tax your thought with a further item. Along with Simon's boat came Simon. Simon rowed in order that Jesus might preach. What a partnership that was! What a division of labor! Came a time when Simon, too, could preach, and no longer needed to row someone who could. But to have rowed the Master to his preaching place! Jesus not only got Simon's boat, but along with it he got Simon's services. Some of us are willing to give our boats, but without ourselves; and ours minus us stands him in small stead. When Cleveland H. Dodge died, one writer, lamenting his death and extolling his life, said that this rich man had always put himself in with his gift. Everywhere his money went, Dodge was sure to go! "The gift without the giver is bare."

Would you know why Christ got not only Simon's boat but Simon? One day the two of them—Simon and Simon's Savior—stood talking together. Jesus knew Simon's faults. He knew what a time he would have to make his opinion obedience. "Lord," Simon once avowed, "with thee I am ready to go both to prison and to death." But when it came to the test, like many another man he could not stand a girl's ridicule of his religion, and he capped his denial with round oaths. It was not easy for Simon to arrive, but arrive he did, and at Pentecost this erstwhile coward had the courage to "stand up with the eleven." Jesus knew, way back there as they were talking, what manner of man this was. He looked him in the eyes, and then uttered this prophecy: "Thou art Simon, thou shalt be Peter." Jesus knew what was in him. And the prophecy came true. The day came when Simon had moved from impetuosity to reliability, which is just a prosaic way of saying what the Master had said back there: Simon had become Peter!

The secret lay in a simple but sublime bit of mathematics: *Simon plus Jesus meant Peter.*

Peter's Boat—for Jesus

Long years after, when Simon had long been Peter, Peter, an old man now, seizes a pen, that he may bring heart to his far-away friends; seizes a pen, though his hand is a-tremble with the palsy and his eyes are so dim that he must needs look close lest he err in the letters he moulds! Simon Peter, within a stone's throw of the place from which he would walk "cross-lots to God," seizes a pen. What do you suppose he is going to write? Is he going to write now how sorry he is that he invested both his boat and himself in the cause of Christ? Is he going to say that he feels he should have kept both his boat and himself to himself instead of putting all at the disposal of Christ? And Peter writes—do not read that epistle of his again until you *see* him write it—and it is so hard to lift those wrists with those chains on them, but he lifts them, painfully, slowly, gladly; and poor, rich Peter writes to his fellow sufferers, for persecution and penury and hate and deprivation and the wild beasts and the fagots await many of them; and so he writes: "Rejoice!" and he likes that word so well that he writes it all over the page: "Rejoice! Rejoice!" as a man facing death to men shortly to die, he writes: *"Rejoice!"*

What have they to rejoice about? Peter knows. His knowledge is expert touching this matter: "For ye are a chosen people; a people belonging especially to God." One fancies he underscored those last words, that they might drink its draught of comfort to the last delicious drop. I do not know what words they

were the Romans inscribed over his cross, for it was their wont to place an inscription there. Had they given Peter the choice, have you any doubt as to what his selection would have been? He would have had it inscribed in all the known languages, that it might have been some such message as that of Pentecost. He would have had himself flung upon that cross with his own label on it: "Belonging especially to God," and he would have died to the music of angels, chanting such poetry the while. And lacking that inscription, it is just so he died!

God, how big, how very big, our boats still seem to us!

> But—shop each day and all day long!
> Friend, your good angel slept, your star
> Suffered eclipse, fate did you wrong!
> From where these sorts of treasures are,
> There should our hearts be—Christ, how far!

That we had eyes to see as Peter did! His boat? That was small. His business? That was small. His comfort? What did that matter? God only mattered; only God. Belonging especially to God, he belonged especially to the ages; and men, high and low, are called by his name; and cities and churches and colleges and children go by his name—and yet, all that is small. What, then, is great? To belong especially to God; to be a friend and kinsman of Jesus, and of folks stumbling and fumbling after Jesus, knowing his the one way worth walking in; to be eternally fit for the Spirit and Mind of the Eternal, that is great! So Peter must have mused as he penned that epistle of his.

Across the River of Death

Then they took him out to die. Poets have ventured their guess as to what happened, then. This time, this last, first time, he launched his bark, not on the sea of Genessaret, as his custom had been, but on that river whose streams enrich the celestial city. It took him a moment to get used to the change. And when he was able to see, he could scarcely believe his eyes! For the Christ he has rowed in a boat which was his, was now at the helm, taking him across the river of death to the city that hath foundations, whose architect and artist is God. "And all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side."

> My bark is wafted to the strand
> By breath divine;
> And on its helm there rests a hand
> Other than mine.
>
> One who was known in storms to sail
> I have on board;
> Above the roaring of the gale
> I hear my Lord.
>
> Safe to the land! Safe to the land!
> The end is this.
> And then with him go hand in hand,
> Far into bliss.

The Universe in the Soul

By Dwight Bradley

And being asked by the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God cometh, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation: neither shall they say, Lo here! or, there! for lo, the kingdom of God is within you.—Luke 17:20, 21.

WHEN we think of the universe, we are likely to think of it as being a great stretch of space containing a vast number of material bodies—planets, suns, satellites—flung out and festooned across the infinite distances. And, as we think thus of the universe, we are likely to think of ourselves as being pygmy little bits of it; and sometimes to wonder why we should take ourselves so seriously, microscopic specks of living matter upon this microscopic speck of a planet which is our home.

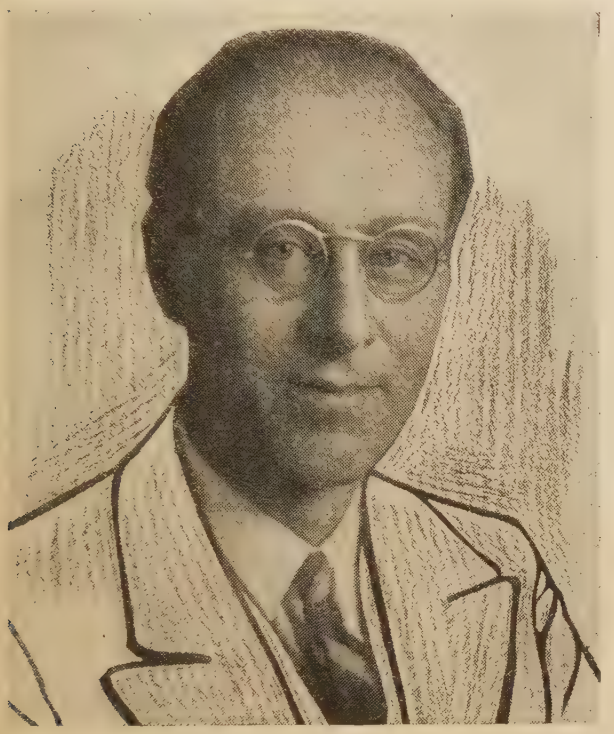
So thinking, we are likely to say that if God created all that, why should we expect him to bother about us when he has so much vaster problems to work out? Why, we ask, should the creator and administrator of the majestic universe consider such unimportant by-products of his creation as the members of the human race? Or why, if he should take the trouble to consider the race as a whole, should he be concerned about the individuals who compose it? In measuring ourselves against the vastness of things, our size seems so ridiculously small and our importance so shrunken, that common sense dictates to us an attitude of self-effacing humility.

Man Is Not Little

But we err when we begin to think of ourselves and the universe in such a fashion. Because we are not, after all, such specks as we sometimes believe. Materially, to be sure, we are mere dots upon the surface of things and quite unimportant. But, if we consider the spiritual nature that is ours, we no longer seem so small. And it is as spiritual beings, not as physical organisms, that we have importance and occupy a real place in the great scheme of things. This is what is meant by the statement, "The kingdom of God is within you." If we look around us and observe the immeasurable space and dwell upon the tremendous size of those orbs, we dwindle to insignificance. But, if we look within, we realize that we ourselves are larger than we thought—that we contain within our soul another universe, the universe of the spirit. We are like Whitman's "noiseless patient spider," who, surrounded by infinity, is likely to be afraid until out of itself it spins the thread that holds it securely and makes it safe as it hangs in the space that yawns like a gulf below. So we may spin out of ourselves the thread that holds us safe; out of ourselves those threads which only can be spun from the substance of the world within.

In trying, therefore, to establish ourselves in the

spiritual cosmos, it would be well to define a little more accurately than we are accustomed to doing, what is the meaning of the word "universe." It comes, of course, from the Latin "universum," which in its turn is derived from the two words, "unus" and "versus"—meaning "one" and "having turned." It implies a complete unit, an entire thing. Wherever, therefore, we locate and measure a whole system of any character, we have a universe within our grasp. This may be a system of bodies in space, or an atom of matter, or a personality. Whatever is complete in itself and



Dwight Bradley

turns upon one axis, revolving about some central point, obeying one set of laws, is a universe. It is perfectly proper thus to speak of a complete human personality as a universe; this is what is meant by the statement—"I hold a universe within my soul." When my personality is obedient to one law, and all of its elements have been organized into one harmonious system, a universe is created, just as the vast universe of space and the microscopic universe that we call an atom are created out of chaotic elements which we call matter and energy.

There may, of course, be many universes both in the outer and the inner realm; and these many universes may comprise together some greater system. It all depends upon whether or not they obey the same laws. It has been discovered by scientific research that our outer world is subject to a single set of laws. From end to end, through all recorded time, these laws are known to have held. We can depend upon them in our daily lives and can foretell events with almost invariable accuracy because we are assured that they will hold. In like manner we have reason to believe that there are laws governing the spiritual world, and that these also have held and will hold in their own domain. Wherever then we see them active, we are conscious of the existence of a spiritual universe. It is with this universe that we are most concerned. We measure the outer world by time and distance, by mass and energy. The soul's universe cannot be so measured but must be gauged by its relationship to God; instead of miles and inches, years and seconds, its criteria of measurement are those of faith and truth, loyalty and love.

Outer and Inner Worlds

Of the outer world we inquire, What is the distance between those points? How rapidly does a ray of light travel? How many light years away is that sun? How large is that planet? Of what material elements is it composed? Of the inner universe we ask, How great is the faith? and How deep is the trust? How steadfast the loyalty? How complete the love? How lofty the motive? How exalted the aim? How pure the goodness? How sincere the thought? The attributes of the outer world are those of shape and size, of speed and energy, of volume and mass, of energy and magnetic attraction. The attributes of the soul's universe are those of truth, of beauty and of goodness. Obviously, the measurements are not the same by which we define qualities of the space-time world and those of the spirit. If we seek to apply the measurements of one to the other, we involve ourselves in confusion. The sciences and mathematics help us to an understanding of the outer world but give us no knowledge of the realm within. Events and catastrophes occur in a material world which have no effect upon a soul. Affairs of the soul may progress without any necessary effect upon the material world.

I may, for example, step out into the street and be struck by an automobile, and as a result my physical organism may be destroyed; but the destruction of my body need have no consequence in the experience of my inner life. But I may cross the street in physical safety during an inner experience which, by the time I have planted my foot upon the opposite curb, may have utterly disorganized my spiritual life and have reduced my soul's universe to chaos. An automobile cannot injure my soul though it shatter my body; nor can physical safety protect my soul though it keep my body from harm. A small object like a bullet, if it strikes me at a vital point, can render my material structure obsolete, but a whole barrage of bullets would be ineffectual to even touch my soul. On the other hand, good food and warm clothing and all of the results of material prosperity may make my body sleek and assist it to function more perfectly; but no amount of food or the finest clothing or the most opulent prosperity can add anything to the truth and beauty and goodness of my inner world.

It is important to face this in our minds and understand how different are the judgments by which we come to conclusions about the outer and the inner world. It is because we forget this difference that we find ourselves troubled over the problems of good and evil. What is good physically and materially has no necessary connection with what is good spiritually. If

it appears that spiritual good and material good coincide sometimes, we should not from that deduce the argument that spiritual good must result from physical good, or that spiritual well-being will produce material happiness. There is no differentiation between good and evil in the realm of pure matter or that of pure spirit. Nature is neither good nor evil—it is nature. Spirit is neither good nor evil—it is spirit. Our perplexity about what we call good and evil arises from our effort to judge natural phenomena according to the laws of spirit, and spiritual phenomena according to the laws of nature. No one ever lived long or "died young" on account of his spirituality or his lack of it; but simply because his body obeyed or was disobedient to the specific laws that govern physical life.

Keats and Browning were both men of profound spirituality; but while Keats died before he was thirty, Browning lived to a ripe old age. It is obvious that no logical connection in the realm of the spirit can be found between the short life of the author of "Endymion" and the long life of the man who wrote "Paracelsus." Keats's body maintained itself only a short time as an organism subject to natural laws, while Browning's body persisted for a relatively much longer time. On the other hand, in the spiritual realm one must acknowledge that the span covered by both lives is very great and one would be hard pressed to make a convincing reply to the question, Which poet is spiritually the greater?

Spiritual Law in Spiritual World

Persistence in the spiritual universe is conditioned, as we have already reiterated, upon strictly spiritual laws which have no necessary connection with the conditions that are brought to pass by the outworking of natural laws. From the standpoint, therefore, of one approaching the problem for the first time, it seems that we are confronted by the existence of two separate worlds; and that in the strife between these two worlds is generated the struggle between good and evil. This, however, is only apparent and is not true in fact. For in reality no such division exists. Only to the consciousness which is emerging from a natural basis to a spiritual one does the conflict between the natural and spiritual and the warfare between good and evil seem real. If I were simply a natural being as, for instance, one of the higher mammals, I should find neither good nor evil in the world, because I should take for granted that which should happen to be around me as being a natural part of the order of things. If I were a purely spiritual being, having graduated entirely from my status as an animal, I should find no differentiation between what I now call good and evil; because I should be conscious only of the spiritual quality of things and should stand upon a plane far beyond the reach of merely natural law.

In order, therefore, to abolish from my mind all suggestion of good and evil standing one over against the other, I should simply have to reduce myself completely to the level of the physical or lift myself completely to the plane of the spiritual. But this, of course, I cannot do. I am a creature in transition, occupying a position neither wholly natural nor wholly spiritual. I regard myself too highly to let myself drop to the physical level and I have not the capacity to carry myself to an eminence where I shall be entirely free from the natural. I, therefore, discover what looks to me like a great struggle between two forces—the natural and the spiritual. But I realize at the same time that the struggle is really within myself and is the result of my as yet unsuccessful effort to create within myself a universe that is absolutely spiritual. My inner life is still in a state of partial chaos. A cosmos has not been fully achieved. But when that cosmos has been achieved, then what I now call the natural world will merge with the spiritual world and I shall see it through the eyes of spirit.

There are times when I think that the achievement is reaching completion and when my soul's universe so completely dominates the whole realm of my consciousness that everything that I see or feel or touch or hear takes its proper place within that universe. At such times the world-strife seems an illusion and I wonder how I ever could have been tormented by those doubts and fears, or distracted by those devastations that once seemed so real. Then I am serene, self-poised, standing in equilibrium within my world. I seem to understand things which were baffling to my natural intelligence, and plainly to see things that once were hidden from my mind; questions that I formerly asked, expecting no answer, are now answered before they are asked. Birth, death, and all of the joys and sorrows that lie between, resolve themselves into a beautiful pattern of destiny.

The Key to Reality

It is as if I should be given a key by which to solve a formerly insoluble problem, or as if the confused parts of a picture-puzzle had suddenly put themselves in their proper places. How simple, how clear, how open have become those confused, murky, hidden connections between the things which I had wanted so passionately and had been denied so cruelly. I realize that my desire and the denial were of one piece. Desire had been the goad to aspiration and denial the discipline by which that aspiration was directed to its appropriate channel. Obstacles, I understand, are for my advantage, and disappointments for the education of my soul to a craving for rewards less ephemeral and satisfactions more enduring. All of these things, and more, I see when I stand upon the crest of spiritual experience; and I know that, if I could maintain my position upon those lofty ranges, I should be troubled by small perplexities and transient difficulties no more. The kingdom of heaven would have been established within me forever and the outer universe would have become subject to the universe of the soul. From such a consideration, we learn that man is potentially greater than the world of outer circumstances, and that when his inner realm has been completely organized, he is superior to all of the forces that govern the natural world. No longer will he need to fear the powers of nature because he is himself greater than nature. And even while he is still subject to natural law

in his body, he is the master of natural law in his soul. As Masefield puts it:

> Men are not gods, we tread the city's dirt,
> But in our souls we may be queens and kings.

Queens and kings we are in that realm where man has overcome space and time, and where he rules as master over all the elements of which his body is a part.

I hold a universe within my soul. It is not complete until my whole life has been brought under its sway. I am not even conscious of it so long as my thought dwells exclusively upon the outer world. I can ignore it, and even reach the point where my intellect tells me to deny its very existence. I can explain its phenomena if I desire, in terms of physics and chemistry. I can satisfy myself with theories as to its biological origin and can work out a system of psychological analysis by which to bring it down to earth. But its elements will still reside within me, waiting to be organized out of chaos into unity. Scientific terms can play about it, but poets only will have access to its meaning; historians can write the record of human life through the centuries, but seers alone may write the story of its career through the channels of man's inner experience. Science can explore the skies and study the atom, but spiritual awareness alone may explore its reaches and encounter its manifestations. Men may gather quantities of facts, but only those may understand those facts who first have understood the inner truth.

The soul's universe cannot be discovered except by those who have considered it, nor understood except by those who are open of mind and ready of mood to hear of it. And only those can fully understand the universe of nature who have first understood the universe of spirit.

Science cannot explore it, but those who have explored it become better scientists.

Scientific research gives no inkling of it, but knowledge of it illuminates scientific research.

It is not affected by the space-time world, but it affects the universe of space and time.

It does not begin with birth nor end with death, but birth and death are the beginning and ending of its mysterious contact with the earth.

It is a mystery beyond understanding but it leads to understanding of all other mysteries.

The Masterpiece

GOD took a piece of common human clay;
Planted therein ambition's vital seed;
Placed him, a youth, beside the common way,
That he might learn the common human need.

Made strong by strife, he faced the storm of wrath;
Love made him wise, a Nation's cause to plead;
He walked with God, though in a yeoman's path,
And seized on fame by an immortal deed.

THOMAS CURTIS CLARK.

The Christ Who Sang!

BY FRED SMITH

When they had sung a hymn . . . Matthew 26:30.

THUS reads the sacred narrative concerning one episode of that eventful night in which Jesus was betrayed. It is a fact which has been too often forgotten in the over-remembering of opposite facts. Men have spoken so long and so often of Christ as "the Man of Sorrows" as to forget that, in a very real sense, he was also "the Man of Song." That "Jesus wept" is true; but equally true is the fact that he also sang.

It seems to me a thousand pities that men have ever allowed themselves to forget this uplifting fact. When we come to survey all the facts of the case, it becomes apparent that as the common conception of the devil has been taken from Milton, so the current conception of Christ is colored by medievalism more than it should be. Looking at the pale, wan Christ of medieval art, with his deep sorrowful eyes, it seemed that "forever on his burdened heart a weight of sorrow hung." In the very nature of things, it was not to be expected of him that he would sing the songs of Jehovah in a sinful world. I recall as a boy reading a book wherein the writer was at pains to show that, while the Scriptures said that "Jesus wept," it never said that he laughed.

Jesus Did Sing!

I have not the literal statement to disprove such a negative statement, but I have the fact that discounts it. For we are told that Jesus sang! We are told that he lived and moved in an atmosphere of thankfulness. Never did morning wear to evening without the joyous note of thankfulness finding expression in the words of Jesus. Renan, who cannot always be followed in his opinions concerning the Christ, seems to have come close to the heart of the truth, however, when he remarked that the early ministry of Jesus was like a continual festival. Melody was in his heart, for joy had there its abiding place. And when we look into our hearts we do not think we are straining Scripture to say that "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth *singeth*." Gratitude finds articulation in praise. Not alone on the night (of all nights!) in which he was betrayed did our Master sing. He who made of his whole life a psalm, would find many an occasion for song. He who could sing in the shadowed hours must surely have had a song for the sunlit days.

Concerning these, the Evangelists seem not to have written. Only on this one occasion do they give specific detail. The incident is lustered with added glory when we remember the occasion of it. In the night in which he was betrayed, Christ sang! I have heard sometimes of those who have "a settled faith": but finer than this is it to have "a singing faith." Such a faith had Paul and Silas, as the incident in the Phi-

lippian jail reveals. So have many others whose stories I cannot stay to amplify here. Such a faith is like unto that of the Master. Herein lies the genius of our faith. It giveth "songs in the night."

> When the fight is fierce, the warfare long,
> Steals on the ear the distant triumph song

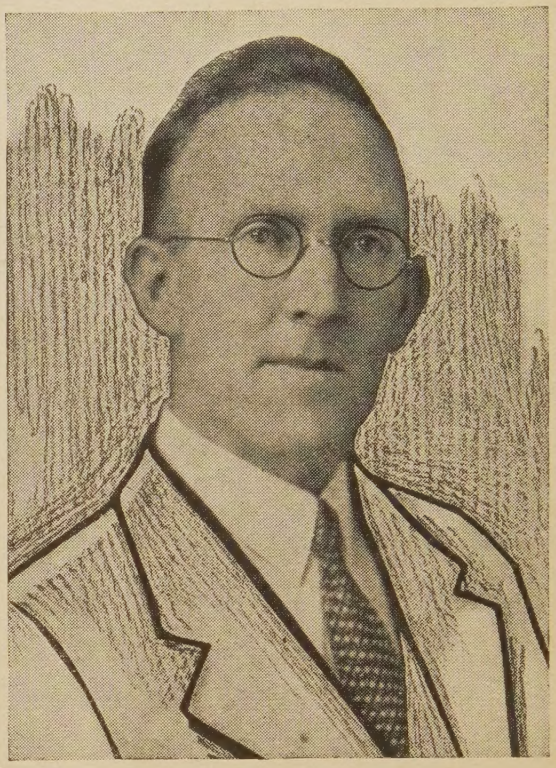
of a small group of men in an upper room; men, with Christ in their midst, singing the great Hallel—the Hallelujah chorus of ancient Israel—in the very, very shadow of the Cross!

A Hymn-Loving People

If we ask what gave Christ the power of song in this shadowed hour, I think we shall find the answer in a threefold reply. First, Jesus was reared among a hymn-loving people. The Hebrew Psalm-book still stands preeminent as one of the great hymn-books of the ages. On pilgrimage and at festival, these people sang to Jehovah with a gladsome mind. Time and time again we find Jesus, in the hour of duress, turning for strength to the words of these ancient psalms. But greater than this was the undoubted fact that Jesus had a singing mother. One needs no further proof of this than that of the story of the days of her child-bearing, when she voiced her thoughts in those glorious words of the hymn which we now know as the Magnificat. I like to think that it was from the lips of his mother that Jesus heard the songs of the people of God, and that his ideals were touched to highest worth by the songs which his mother sang while busy at her work. Thus, through the mother, did he early learn to cadence the duties of life to the rhythm of joy.

But above and beyond these things was the greater fact of his Father's will. His soul was tranquilized in God. He always did the things that were pleasing to the Father. And we know, do we not, that a task well done is the birth of a song. The life which is filled with highest morality is, by that same token, full of the divinest music. Jesus was attuned to God. He and the Father were one. With his poet heart he had early learned that the Father is more than a great law-giver. Christianity is more than commandment; it is comradeship. Not through imposed laws but by deepening loyalties it grows from more to more. Through this faith we enter into the ultimate fellowship. And friendship fructifies in joy. Our own Clinton Scollard has caught the meaning of this better than some of our theologians when he speaks of the Christians as "they of the singing heart." We do not ask enough of God. We petition for strength for the day when we should be asking of him a song for the way! Remember the experience of the Psalmist: "He hath put a new song in my mouth." Let that experience be ours also. Your Christianity is not at par, much less at a premium, if it does not give you a new song. Our sighing Christians have done much harm.

Do not misunderstand me here. I am not saying that there is nothing to cause us sorrow in this world. That simply is not my subject for today. My present task is to speak a good word for the expression of that joy which is the common possession of every Christian who has entered richly into fellowship with Christ. To serve with Christ is to "enter into the fellowship of his sufferings." But it is also to enter into the fellowship of his singing. It is good to have strength for the day; but it is better if you have a song



FRED SMITH

for the night. On the night in which he was betrayed, it is written, Jesus sang a hymn.

> There are, in this loud, stunning tide
> Of human care and crime,
> With whom the melodies abide
> Of th' everlasting chime;
> Who carry music in their heart
> Through dusky lane and wrangling mart,
> Plying their task with busier feet
> Because their secret souls a holy strain repeat.

The Christ who sang! Remember him in the hour of your trial. In the night in which he was betrayed there was given unto him not only strength to stand, but power to sing. It is good if you have enough of Christianity to mold your morality to highest ends; but better will it be if you have enough of Christianity to make of your life a melody.

> Fill thou my life, O Lord, my God,
> In every part with praise,
> That my whole being may proclaim
> Thy being and thy ways.
>
> So shall each fear, each fret, each care,
> Be turned into song,
> And every winding of the way
> Thy echo shall prolong;
>
> So shall no part of day or night
> From sacredness be free,
> But all my life, in every step,
> Be fellowship with thee.

The Editor's Page

The Event of the Month

THE STAKE of religion in the London naval conference is obvious to all who believe that our Christian faith is vitally concerned with human civilization. And most of us now hold our religion and human welfare in the same compartment of our hearts. The peace movement has become a passionate expression of Christian purpose. The London conference of the five leading naval powers of the world is an event of far greater importance to Christianity than any ecumenical council of ecclesiastics that ever met. It is an attempt to translate the idealism of peace into a great deed. We have had covenants, and treaties; we have lately made a brand-new fundamental law of the world which has put war into the category of an international crime. Now the world's conscience is demanding that all this shall register definitely in our practice. Having renounced war, why should we further prepare for it! London will tell just what degree of trust these great nations put in one another's good faith. No one will expect that the results will show 100 per cent of trust all around. That degree of international confidence can be attained only by growth. But if armaments are once limited, and a substantial beginning is made in their reduction, it will herald a new day. It will create a new mind. In a few years there will be more confidence, more faith, and further and more drastic reductions will follow. Armaments presuppose war and provoke it. Reduce them to the level required for police service on the seas, and the nations will be in a mood to carry their disputes to courts of justice and law for settlement.

The Book of the Month

THE SOCIAL SOURCES OF DENOMINATIONALISM, *by H. Richard Niebuhr. Henry Holt & Company, New York.* $2.50.

DO YOU know the history of your own denomination? Of course you know its institutional history, its doctrinal history, the story of its growth as a separate group, and you are well informed concerning the ecclesiastical circumstances connected with its origin. But do you know the deeper reasons why your denomination came into existence? Not many of us do. We have been accustomed to accept the account which our denominations themselves have given. I have two sets of books in my library setting forth the story of the leading denominations. In every case the story is told from *within,* by a writer who is himself a member of the group of which he writes. Manifestly this cannot be the highest kind of history. Long have we waited for the book which Dr. Niebuhr has now given us. His thesis is that all our denominations have arisen out of social conditions, and that each time the church divided, or subdivided, a social situation was the real explanation of the event. He traces the entire history of ecclesiastical division, from the great cleft between Rome and Constantinople down to the Christian Science church, and discloses the social (which term includes economic, political and cultural) background without which the divisions would not have taken place. The history of schism, he contends, is the history of Christianity's defeat. The church divided into sects by becoming a victim of social forces which its Founder intended it should conquer and transcend. If some rich man would say to me: "I wish to send a book as a gift to every minister in America; what book shall it be?" I would not hesitate to reply, "Send this book!" Niebuhr has rewritten church history. If I were taking my theological education over again, I would go straight to Eden Theological Seminary where he teaches and sit at this young man's feet.

A Thought for the Month

WE CANNOT HOPE to win in life's battle if we approach the crises of experience with faint and timid hearts. Our temptations already have bested us if we shrink in weakness as we confront them. Only a stout heart can take the field with any assurance of victory. Yet we make a great mistake if we confuse courage with self-assurance. Humility and a sense of lack are not sources of weakness but of strength. This fact is of the essence of religion. There is a Power not ourselves whose help is available in every crucial test to which our wills are subjected. Our little lives are in the keeping and under the care of this Power. Religion is nothing more than the way in which men appropriate and cooperate with the forces which this superhuman, or extrahuman, Power puts at our disposal. All the elaborate technique of religion, its organization, its "services," its doctrines, its liturgies, its preaching, its fellowship—all arise from and should point back into this elementary purpose to establish vital and energizing contact with the primal Source of all power. And the supreme condition of such contact is genuine humility, the sense of need, of lack, of self-insufficiency. Whatever success comes to us is thus felt to be not our own achievement, but the achievement of God who works his will through us. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me! A legion of angels hovers on guard to help those who lean thus upon the divine resources. The mountains round about are filled with the horses and chariots of fire. Only the humble heart possesses the secret of courage. When I am weak, then am I strong!

Charles Clayton Morrison

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Lent
Easter
Pentecost

are now on the horizon

—Pentecost celebration has already begun!

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